



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Nashville District

Cheatham Lake

Lake Casts



Spring 2008

Cutting, Damaging, or Destroying Trees on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Property is a Federal Crime

Trees are as much a part of our natural heritage as they are an important environmental resource. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District, is charged with preserving all of the trees that exist on the public lands surrounding our beautiful lakes on the Cumberland River and its tributaries.

Cutting of trees or the damage or removal of any vegetation for any purpose, including timber harvesting, creating views of the lake, pruning, landscaping, mowing or under brushing is a federal crime and is punishable under the provisions of Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 327. Any person who violates the provisions of Title 36, CFR, Part 327, may be punished by a fine of not more than \$5,000 or imprisonment for not more than six months or both, and may be tried and sentenced in accordance with the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3401.

Primarily due to the outstanding environmental quality and aesthetics of Cheatham Lake, the lake and the surrounding public property are well known to a diverse group of outdoor recreationists and attract more than two million visitors annually from Tennessee and surrounding states. The 7,450-acre lake and 320 miles of shoreline adjacent to the approximately 2,667 acres of public lands draw those visitors and prompt them to add more than \$33 million to the local economy as they pursue outdoor recreational activities such as wildlife viewing and photography, boating, fishing, camping, picnicking, hiking, or just simply sight-seeing.

Many of these trees have been around for many years and have been witness to the events that have shaped the history of the Cumberland River Valley. They have served as shelter and provider to humans and animals alike through the decades. They provide beauty to our lakes and habitat for wildlife. Their root system binds the soil, thereby preventing erosion and sediment runoff. Many anglers enjoy the shade of the giant oaks and maples on the shoreline on a hot day.

Sadly, many of these trees are now being threatened by adjacent lakeshore residents who are willing to damage or destroy public property for personal financial gain and/or to obtain improvements to their personal property in the form of lake views and vistas for their homes. They are destroying public property that belongs to all of us!

Anyone who observes or has knowledge of theft, vandalism, or any other threat or suspicious activity against Corps property is also encouraged to participate in the "Corps Watch" program, which is a nationwide crime-watch program developed to protect Corps of Engineers property. Each year, millions of dollars are lost due to property damage from vandalism, larceny, arson, and environmental and cultural resource degradation. This program is designed to heighten public awareness of the seriousness of the impacts of crime within or around dams, lakes, locks, recreation areas, and other Corps of Engineers property and facilities.

Authorized by Section 205 of the Water Resource Development Act of 2000 and the Economy Act (31 U.S.C. 1535), national funding is available to issue rewards of up to \$1,000 to individuals for information leading to the arrest and prosecution of offenders. "Corps Watch" uses a 24-hour-a-day toll free hotline that assures the identity of the caller is protected and the proper authorities are notified. To report theft, vandalism, or any threat or suspicious activity against Corps property, please call the

"Corps Watch" hotline at 1-866-413-7970.

Consideration is being given to suspending or revoking permitted privileges, such as boat docks or mowing permits, for landowners guilty of destruction of public property. This issue will likely be discussed during the next update of the Cheatham Lake Shoreline Management Plan.

Please call the Cheatham Lake Resource Manager's Office at (615) 792-5697 or (615) 254-3734, Monday - Friday, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm, CST for additional information or to learn how you can help protect the outstanding environmental quality of the land and water resources at Cheatham Lake.

Staff Changes

There have been several changes in the Cheatham Lake Staff since the last issue of Lake Casts.

Jerry Strothers, Environmental Protection Specialist, retired on

May 5, 2005 with over 31 years of service. Thanks for a job well done, Jerry! He was replaced by Mark Klimaszewski in February of 2006. Although he loved working at Cheatham Lake, Mark made the decision to move closer to home by taking a job at Old Hickory Lake as their Conservation Biologist in July 2007.

Charlie Leath, who worked as a Park Ranger at Cheatham Lake from May 2003 until June 2004, returned to our staff on November 26, 2007. Charlie was selected as the new Environmental Protection Specialist.

Crystal Tingle, who worked as a Park Ranger from January 2004 until April 2005, was reassigned to Old Hickory Lake after completing her training at Cheatham Lake.

Becky Jolly Smith, Park Ranger, worked at Cheatham Lake from April 2005 until November 2, 2007. She and her husband moved to Georgia where he has accepted a

new job.

Gabriella Cannon joined our staff as a student aid in August 2005. Brian Mangrum, Park Ranger at Lake Barkley, will be joining us at the end of March 2008.

The Cheatham Lake maintenance staff went through some changes of their own. Tommy Cushman, Civil Engineering Technician, retired in September 2005 with over 40 years of service with the Corps. Thanks for keeping our parks going for all those years! Dan Dowlen was selected as his replacement on 22 January 2007. He previously worked at Cheatham Lock where he was an operator and now is adjusting well to his new duties.

The recent changes in our staff might make you wonder which ranger to call with questions on the locations of the public property line, shore-line use permits, flowage easements, bank stabilization, and other issues. Here are the current ranger area assignments:

Ranger Charlie Leath -Cheatham Dam upstream to the Highway 49 Bridge in Ashland City.

Ranger Tadd Potter-Highway 49 Bridge upstream to Briley Parkway Bridge in Nashville.

Rangers Charlie Leath and Tadd Potter-Upper section of Lake Barkley from Cheatham Dam downstream to the Stewart County line.

For information on the portion of Lake Barkley within Stewart County, Tennessee, please call Ranger Jeff Hancock at the Stewart County Resource Office, at (931) 232-7724.



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VOLUNTEERS

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers that have contributed their time and efforts to our lake this past year. Volunteers do make a difference!! There are many more opportunities during the upcoming season. Examples include: shoreline cleanup, Park Host, Visitor Center, primitive camping area work, trails, fisheries management and maintenance to name a few. Contact Park Ranger Charlie Leath for more information.

**Volunteer Clearinghouse
1-800-865-8337
Give a Helping Hand!**

WWW.CORPSLAKES.US/VOLUNTEER

Improving our Public Lands at Cheatham Lake

You could not ask for a better day to celebrate National Public Lands Day (NPLD), our nation's largest annual coast-to-coast, single-day volunteer restoration effort, at Cheatham Lake on 29 September 2007. 70 volunteers decided to roll up their sleeves and devote their day to improving an interpretive trail located off River Road next to Sam's Creek in Ashland City.

A total of 206 native plants were planted in man made berms that surround the interpretive trail. With the help of adults, each plant was carefully planted by the hands of Cub Scout Pack 566 from Clarksville Tennessee. Corps Retiree Jerry Strother and his wife, Marilynn, improved a wildlife viewing platform that overlooked a wetland by cutting back brush that was encroaching upon the area.



Members of Cub Scout Pack 566

As the day came to a close, each volunteer was fed lunch consisting of pizza, chips, and drinks. Most volunteers worked up quite the appetite as they made their way through the line for more. Many of the volunteers asked about working NPLD next year. With a

group of volunteers like we had, you could only look forward to the next event, scheduled for September 27, 2008.

The Importance of Native Warm Season Grasses

The staff at Cheatham Lake continues to maintain areas of native warm season grass (nwsg) as well as trying to establish new ones. You may ask yourself, why is nwsg so important? The answer is easy. Because they are native to the area, they grow well during the summer heat and produce abundant seed. These grasses grow in clumps, and the bare ground between the grass clumps provides wildlife cover and nesting space. This produces excellent habitat conditions for species such as bobwhite quail, cottontail rabbits, and various small mammals. Whitetail deer graze native grasses, and the assemblage of prey species present attracts predators. The use of nwsg is not limited to wildlife habitat.

They also can provide excellent forage for livestock. In fact, when properly hayed or grazed, nwsg can still provide nesting and brood-rearing habitat as well as winter cover. If you are interested in establishing native grasses on your property, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service and/or Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency for information and assistance.

Fish Bustin' Rodeo Takes Place on National Get Outdoors Day

If you're interested in a free event that allows adults and children to enjoy some quality time in the great outdoors, then mark your calendars for the "National Get Outdoors Day", Saturday, **June 14, 2008**. American Bass Anglers, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers invite anglers age 15 and under to participate in the 17th Annual Fish Bustin' Rodeo at Cheatham Lake.

As part of a new National Campaign, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its staff at Cheatham Lake, is offering individuals and families this opportunity to experience outdoor activities on public lands. Rain or Shine, the event will begin at 7:30 a.m. and will last until 10:30 a.m. The fish Bustin' Rodeo will take place at the entrance of Cheatham Dam Right Bank Recreation Area. Take part in National Get Outdoors Day and reconnect to the public lands that belong to you.

For more information on this event, please contact Park Ranger, Brian Mangrum at (615) 792-5697 or (615) 254-3734.

Designated Camping Areas

Camping is permitted only at sites and/or areas designated for camping. Cheatham Lake offers two designated campgrounds for those who enjoy sleeping under the stars.

**Resource Managers Office
Cheatham Lake
1798 Cheatham Lake Road**

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Both Lock A and Harpeth River Bridge Campgrounds are open from April through October and have developed camping pads and resident park attendants. Potable water is available at Harpeth River Bridge Campground but does not provide electrical outlets. Lock A offers campsites with water and electrical hookups, a central restroom-shower building, and a dumping station for recreational vehicles.

Camping outside of designated areas, such as islands, is a violation of Title 36, Rules and Regulations. These undesignated areas do not provide the necessary sanitary facilities that are needed and wildlife habitat is being destroyed. Help us preserve the natural environmental conditions of Cheatham Lake by camping at our designated campgrounds only.

Contacts

To obtain more information about the items in this issue or other aspects of the management of Cheatham Lake, contact the Resource Manager's Office at 1798 Cheatham Dam Road, Ashland City, Tennessee 37015-9805; Telephone (615) 792-5697 or 254-3734. You can also visit our website at <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/op/che/rec/>. For information on lake and tail water elevations, generation schedule, water temperature, and fishing call (615) 792-2190.

To make a reservation at a campground operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, go to www.recreation.gov or call 1-877-444-6777. Are you interested in volunteering at a Corps lake? Call the nationwide volunteer hotline at 1-800-VOL-TEER (1-800-865-8337). Are you interested in volunteering at a Corps lake? Call the nationwide volunteer hotline at 1-800-VOL-TEER (1-800-865-8337).